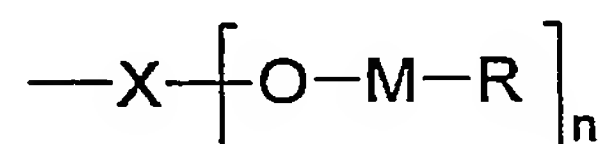


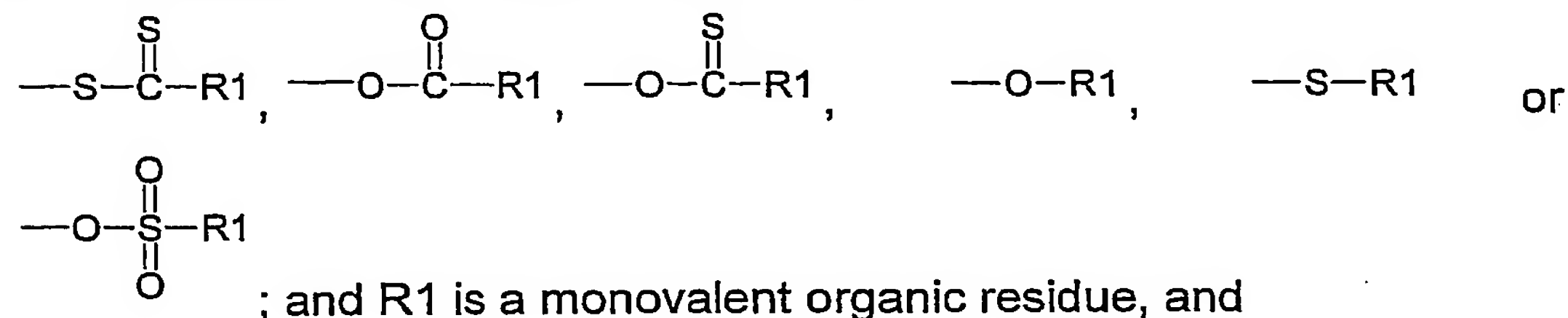
Claims

1. An antifouling coating composition comprising
 -- 20-100% by weight, calculated on the total amount of film-forming
 components, of a film-forming polymer (A) having an acrylic backbone
 bearing at least one terminal group of the formula:



wherein X represents $-\overset{\text{O}}{\parallel}{C}-$, $-\overset{\text{S}}{\parallel}{C}-$, $-\overset{\text{O}}{\parallel}{P}-$ or $-\overset{\text{O}}{\parallel}{P}<$

M is a metal of Group Ib, IIa, IIb, IIIa, IIIb, IVa, IVb, Va, VIa, VIb, VIIa,
 and VIII of the Periodic Table with a valency of 2 or more and a degree
 of ionisation less than that of the alkali metals metal; n is an integer of 1
 to 2; R represents an organic residue selected from



- 80-0% by weight, calculated on the total amount of film-forming
 components, of polymer (B) is selected from polymers which are free of
 $-X-[O-M-R]_n$ terminal groups but which are reactive in water, slightly
 water-soluble, water-sensitive, or insoluble in water.
- a copper-based biocide for aquatic organisms
- characterised in that that the antifouling coating composition is substantially
 free of any biocidal zinc compounds and substantially free of rosin, and in
 that the copper-based biocide has a metallic copper content below 2 % by
 weight, based on the total weight of the copper-based biocide.
2. The antifouling coating composition according to claim 1, characterised in
 that M is Cu, Zn, or Te.

3. The antifouling coating composition according to claim 1 or 2, characterized in that the film-forming polymer (A) is an acrylic polymer in which X

represents $\text{—}\overset{\text{O}}{\underset{\text{||}}{\text{C}}}\text{—}$, M is copper and R represents $\text{—O—}\overset{\text{O}}{\underset{\text{||}}{\text{C}}}\text{—R1}$, wherein
 5 R1 is a monovalent organic residue.

4. The antifouling coating composition according to any one of the preceding claims, characterized in that the copper-based biocide for aquatic organisms comprises cuprous oxide having a metallic copper content below
 10 2 % by weight, based on the total weight of the cuprous oxide.

5. The antifouling coating composition according to claim 4, characterized in that the cuprous oxide has a metallic copper content below 1% by weight, based on the total weight of the cuprous oxide.

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6. The antifouling coating composition according to any one of the preceding claims, characterized in that the copper-based biocide for aquatic organisms comprises copper pyrithione.

- 20 7. The antifouling coating composition according to claim 6, characterised in that the copper-based biocide for aquatic organisms comprises a combination of cuprous oxide having a metallic copper content below 2 % by weight, based on the total weight of the cuprous oxide and copper pyrithione.

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8. The antifouling coating composition according to claim 1, characterized in that the film-forming polymer (A) is an acrylic polymer in which X represents

$\text{—}\overset{\text{O}}{\underset{\text{||}}{\text{C}}}\text{—}$, M is copper and R is the residue of an organic monobasic carboxylic acid which has a boiling point greater than 115°C and an acid
 30 value between 50 and 950 mgKOH/gramme, wherein the copper-based

biocide for aquatic organisms comprises a combination of cuprous oxide having a metallic copper content below 2 % by weight, based on the total weight of the cuprous oxide and copper pyrithione..

- 5 9. A process for protecting a man-made structure immersed in a fouling aquatic environment wherein the structure is coated with an antifouling coating composition according to any one of the preceding claims.
- 10 10. The process of claim 9, wherein the aquatic environment is a low salinity aquatic environment.
11. A man-made structure immersed in an fouling aquatic environment coated with a coating composition according any one of claims 1 to 8.
- 15 12. The man-made structure of claim 11 which is immersed in a low-salinity aquatic environment.
- 20 13. The man-made structure of claim 11 wherein the structure is immersed in a low-salinity aquatic environment for part of its life and in a saline aquatic environment for part of its life.